

Fort Pulaski, Georgia--[The men sleep on] straw mattresses.

--Ibid., 149.

Fort Richardson, Texas--The bedding consists of . . . double bedsacks filled with hay, which is renewed monthly.

--Ibid., 186.

Post at San Antonio, Texas--[The bunks are furnished with] the usual bedding.

--Ibid., 183.

Fort San Carlos de Barrancas, Florida--And the bedsacks [are] filled with straw.

--Ibid., 156.

Post at Shreveport, Louisiana--[The bunks are furnished] with the usual bedding.

--Ibid., 175.

Fort Stanton, New Mexico--[The men sleep on bunks] containing bedsacks, etc.

--Ibid., 248.

Fort Stockton, Texas--The men sleep on straw ticks.

--Ibid., 225.

Camp Supply, Oklahoma--[The men sleep on] bedsacks filled with hay . . . .

--Ibid., 262.

Taylor Barracks, Kentucky--The bedding of the men is good in quality and abundant in quantity.

--Ibid., 139.

Fort Wadsworth, New York--[The] bedsacks are filled with straw, and changed as often as required to insure cleanliness and health.

--Ibid., 18.

Fort Wadsworth, Dakota--[The bunks are] furnished with the usual bedding.

--Ibid., 378.

Fort Warren, Massachusetts--[The bunks are furnished] with the usual bedding.

--Ibid., 7.

Fort Wingate, New Mexico--[The] bedsacks [are] filled with hay.

--Ibid., 251.

1872:

Fort Davis, Texas--The troops are now supplied with single iron Bunks, and bedsacks filled with hay and blankets, but their beds are never tidy, or orderly.

--Medical History of Fort Davis, May 1872.

1875:

But even with the single bunks the supply of bedding is unsatisfactory. No sheets or pillows are furnished, and the men come into direct contact with the blankets, and use their greatcoats for pillows. The blankets are seldom washed, although they are aired and beaten occasionally. The

bedsacks are usually too short, and, as Colonel C. H. Smith . . . remarks, "No amount of too short bed can make a man comfortable."

The recommendation of Dr. Patzki, that wire mattresses, hair-pillows, and sheets be furnished for the troops, is believed to be a good one, the results of which in promoting comfort and content among the men, would be a full equivalent for the money it would cost.

--Report on Hygiene, xviii.

1876:

To meet a want felt in the Army, the Secretary of War, on 18th September 1875, on recommendation of the Acting Quartermaster General, authorized issue of pillow-sacks to the troops. They are made from a very large stock of shelter-tents in store. Their issue has made it necessary to increase the monthly allowance of straw to enlisted men.

--ARQMG 1876, 126.

### Blankets

1814:

George Town--[I have] had the delivery of a number of Patent Blankets. I took notice they were very durable, they keep the wet or dampness from the soldier better than the Common Blanket (such as was usually

delivered soldiers). I think they answer better than the Indian Blanket. They only want a little more in length.

--Statement of Lieut. W. C. Hobbs, 36th Infantry, July 19, 1814, QMConFile--Blankets, RG92.

1861:

The troops in the field need Blankets. The supply in the country is exhausted. Men spring to arms faster than the mills can manufacture, and large quantities ordered from abroad have not yet arrived.

To relieve pressing necessities, contributions are invited from the surplus stores of families.

The regulation army Blanket weighs five pounds; but good, sound woolen Blankets weighing not less than four pounds, will be gladly received at the offices of the United States Quartermasters in the principal towns of the loyal States, and applied to the use of the troops.

To such as have Blankets which they can spare, but cannot afford to give, the full market value of suitable Blankets, delivered as above, will be paid.

New York, October 1, 1861. M. C. Meigs,  
Quartermaster-General United States.

--Notice published in newspapers, clippings in QMConFile--Blankets, RG92.

Civil War:

Shoddy blankets--[Shoddy is] a villainous compound, the refuse stuff and sweepings of the shop, pounded, rolled, glued, and smoothed to the external form and gloss of cloth, but no more like the genuine article than the shadow is to the substance. [Soldiers issued blankets and clothes of shoddy found them on the first march or during the first storm] scattering to the winds in rags, or dissolving into their primitive elements of dust under the pelting rain.

--Tomes, "The Fortunes of War," 227-28.

1872:

The new Mission Mills blanket--This blanket costs more than the old one, but it is warmer, softer, and will be more durable than any heretofore issued.

--ARQMG 1872, 141-42.

1876:

As the black stripe and letters "U. S.," now used to mark the Army blanket, appear to injure its durability, arrangements have been made to substitute indigo-blue letters and stripes in future contracts.

--ARQMG 1876, 127.

## Lighting

### Civil War:

For lighting these huts the government furnished candles in limited quantities: at first long ones, which had to be cut for distribution; but later they provided short ones. [Supplies were inconsistent. Only the infantry had "official candlesticks" (bayonets).] Quite often the candle was set upon a box in its own drippings.

Whenever candles failed, slush lamps were brought into use. These I have seen made by filling a sardine box with cook-house grease, and inserting a piece of rag in one corner for a wick. The whole was then suspended from the ridgepole of the hut by a wire. This wire came to camp around bales of hay brought to the horses and mules.

--Billings, Hardtack and Coffee, 72-73.

### 1880:

[The few candles in barracks sufficed only] to render darkness visible.

--Quoted in Foner, United States Soldier Between Wars, 18.

[If the General of the Army wishes to know why the men desert,] he has only to look into our dungeon barracks with the men huddled around the flickering flame of one or two candles. How many evenings would he or any officer spend in such a hole?

--Officer quoted *ibid.*

1881:

[Now that lamps will be issued,] the men, being able to read without injury to their eyes, spend more time in rational amusements and less time at the sutler store, at the grog-shops, and in the guardhouse.

--ARSecWar 1881, 12-13.

So if "fiat lux" the order is,  
And candles are shown the door,  
Round the bright kerosene twenty men will be seen,  
To one at the trader's store.

--Enlisted man quoted in Foner, United States Soldier Between Wars, 78.

#### Heating

1843:

Fort Atkinson, Iowa--A requisition for 19 stoves for the hospital and officers' and men's quarters has been forwarded to the quartermaster at St. Louis, which I trust may be immediately met, so that they may be here before the commencement of the winter. Many of the chimneys smoke so badly that no comfort can be expected without stoves, and more than this, a great saving of fuel will be made, for to supply the fire places the daily labor of 25 axe men and five teamsters is requisite during the winter, whereas 10 axe men and 2 teamsters can supply the stoves.

--Prucha, Army Life, 49.

1852-53:

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas--If the Government allowance for wood was not sufficient, we took a company team, made a detail, and hauled more from above the post.

--Lowe, Five Years a Dragoon, 76-77.

1854-55:

Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania--The rooms were heated by stoves in which we burned wood. They were comfortably warm during the winter, which I found less severe in Southern Pennsylvania than in New York.

--Meyers, Ten Years in the Ranks, 36.

1855-56:

Fort Pierre, Dakota--Each [portable wooden] house was furnished with two sheet iron stoves for burning wood, and had stove pipes passing through the roof.

Officers and soldiers suffered alike. The miserable huts in which we lived during the winter were unfit for stables. We almost froze in them, and when spring came, the mud roofs leaked like sieves.

I look back upon the winter passed at Fort Pierre as one of great suffering and hardship, by far the worst that I went through during my service.

--Ibid., 72, 106-07.

1856:

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas--We had to clean our quarters, draw rations, put in a supply of wood, fill our bed sacks, and so on.

--Bandel, Frontier Life in the Army, 102.

1857:

[We request an appropriation] of twenty thousand dollars to provide stoves for the quarters of officers and soldiers, not exceeding two to each officer above the rank of captain, and one to each captain and subaltern, and four to each company of soldiers above 40° of north latitude, and two to each company below that latitude . . . . There has never been an appropriation for either stoves or . . . though the former are really necessary in the winter-season in all the northern and northwestern portions of our country, and are often necessary in the western and southern portions of it.

--Jesup to Secretary of War, Jan. 26, 1857, reproduced in ARQMG 1876, 269.

Civil War:

Winter huts--The fireplaces were built of brick, of stone, or of wood. [The chimneys were laid up outside the huts.]

--Billings, Hardtack and Coffee, 46-47.

1870:

Fort Laramie, Wyoming--[All the barracks are heated by stoves.] The most of [the men] are fain to protect themselves against the rigor of the winter . . . . They nearly all complain of sleeping cold.

--Billings, Report on Barracks and Hospitals, 347.

1874:

Fort Robinson, Nebraska--[The delivery of heating stoves was delayed by] criminal neglect.

--Grange, "Fort Robinson," 203.

1875:

The cost of providing stoves for the Army is now large and seems to be increasing from year to year. [Standard patterns and regulations on distribution should be established.]

--Meigs to Secretary of War, April 8, 1875, ARQMG 1876, 269.

[Because of the absence of uniform patterns and of regulations on the use of stoves, and to bring expenses under control, on April 8, 1875 the Quartermaster General proposed to the Secretary] that some general pattern of cooking and heating stoves and ranges should be adopted, and the number to be supplied to officers and troops prescribed by regulations; that the stoves of no particular manufacturor should be

adopted, but that general specifications of size and construction, of plain, substantial, and convenient heating and cooking stoves, adapted to the use of bituminous and anthracite coals, and wood, should be drawn up, published, and followed hereafter. [A board of officers assembled in Omaha May 15, to do all that, but had not reported by the end of the fiscal year.]

--M. I. Ludington to Meigs, Aug. 14, 1875, ARQMG 1875, 250-51.

It should be borne in mind that the expense of providing the Army with stoves is very great.

--Meigs to Col. J. C. Davis, May 6, 1875, ARQMG 1876, 267-68.

1880:

Most of the stoves issued to the Army are now manufactured at the Rock Island arsenal. Seventy-four were made there during the year; 140 more were ordered in June, which will be delivered during the current fiscal year.

--ARQMG 1880, 322.

## Mess Facilities

### 1813:

[We can supply] a quantity of Camp Kittles at 25 Cts per Lbs & a quantity of Mess pans at 70 Cents per piece [and axes and chains.]

--Proposal of William Romy, 1813, QMConFile--Kitchen Equipment 1813, RG92.

### 1820:

Cantonment Missouri, Nebraska--[It is already February and still there are not enough tables or shelving to hold] table furniture and fragments of provisions.

--Quoted in Johnson, "Cantonment Missouri," 125.

### 1830:

Post at Alexandria, Virginia--In the company messroom, I found a range of tables, neatly garnished with clean table clothes and the requisite furniture for dinner. I found a non-com presiding at the end of each table, with an ample tureen of excellent turtle soup before him, from which he was helping his mess mates.

--Inspection report of Col. William McRae, quoted in Kummerow and Brown, Enlisted Barracks at Fort Snelling, 20.

1844:

Fort Pike, Louisiana--The kitchen and its utensils, the mess room, and mess furniture are in good condition . . . .

--Prucha, Army Life, 67.

New Orleans Barracks, Louisiana--The mess rooms and kitchens are as clean and neat as any one could desire.

--Ibid., 68.

Fort Washita, Oklahoma--The kitchens and mess rooms are in good order, but having dirt floors, they can not be made to look very neatly. One of the companies, G, spreads its table under a shed, which I take for granted will be boarded up before the cold weather sets in.

--Ibid.

1857:

Fort McHenry, Maryland, kitchens in both barracks--No. 1 Cook room . . . has had cook range repaired, new lock on door, plastered and repainted, wants floor [illegible] cook range repaired. No. 2. Cook room . . . cook range repaired, new locks on door, plastered and repainted.

--J. L. Donaldson to Lieut. Col. H. Brooks, July 3, 1857, QMConFile--McHenry, Fort, RG92.

1860:

Recruits bound for their regiments, Governors Island, New York--One morning a few days later we formed on the parade ground, fully equipped with knapsack, haversack, tin cup, tin plate, knife, fork and spoon, a canteen and three days' rations of boiled salt pork and hard bread stowed in our haversacks; but without arms.

--Meyers, Ten Years in the Ranks, 160.

1870:

Fort Laramie, Wyoming--[The kitchens in the men's quarters] all are provided with cooking-stoves, tables, and benches. Most of the companies are in possession of good mess furniture, consisting of delf plates, bowls, and knives and forks.

--Billings, Report on Barracks and Hospitals, 347.

Fort Davis, Texas--B. Co. . . . Kitchen in all respects, in very good condition. C. Co. . . . Kitchen, neat and clean except tables. K. Co. . . . Kitchen--Range not clean, table dirty, shelves in cupboard dirty, Provision boxes and packs for the same dirty.

--Medical History of Fort Davis, Jan. 5, 1870.

Fort Davis, Texas--C. Co. . . . Kitchen clean. Provision boxes also.  
K. Co. . . . Kitchen, Range dirty. Cupboard in which dishes are kept  
dirty.

--Ibid., Jan. 7, 1870.

1872:

Fort Davis, Texas--The mess rooms and kitchens are not plastered--have  
earth floors--and are equally as dirty and untidy as the barracks.

--Ibid., May 1872.

#### Other Contents of Barracks

1826:

Cantonment Oglethorpe, Georgia--Fire hook and chain . . . \$10.00. Fire  
buckets . . . \$25.00.

-- Report of the Quartermaster General upon the Subject of Barracks,  
Storehouses, Hospitals, &c. (1827), 7.

1833:

Hancock Barracks, Maine--[After a fire destroyed one of the barracks,  
officers, noncommissioned officers, and enlisted men petitioned Congress  
for compensation for] a considerable loss of furniture and personal  
apparel; that this loss was greatly increased by their personal exertions  
having been principally directed to the preservation of the other

buildings, and for which purpose the carpets and blankets belonging to both officers and men were used, and partially or wholly destroyed . . . .

--Report on Claim (op. cit.).

1838:

[The many worn-out hoes, kettles, and other objects carried on the inventory at nearly every post] serve but to lumber up the store rooms.

Prucha, Army Life, 83, 85.

1852-53:

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas--Cook got some barrels and had them sawed in two for bath tubs, which we could use in the dining room between supper and tattoo.

--Lowe, Five Years a Dragoon, 77.

1853:

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas--[The company commander organized a subscription among the officers and men to purchase a library, which was delivered in February. It included a set of] Harpers Classical and Family Libraries [in] a pair of book cases, with hinges closing the edges on one side, and two locks the edges on the other side, held the library of uniform size and binding. When open the title of each book could be

read, and when closed no book could move or get out of place; the books were all the same length and breadth, and an excellent collection.

--Ibid., 98-99.

1854:

Musicians' training barrack Governors Island, New York--A wide shelf around the room above the beds provide space for knapsacks, extra shoes, drums, fifes, and other objects, and on hooks under the shelf were hung the overcoats. There was a coal fire burning in the grate. A few wooden benches and a chair for the corporal in charge; this, with a water pail and a tin cup on a shelf behind the door, completed the furniture of the room.

--Meyers, Ten Years in the Ranks, 2-3; cf. Ostrander's description of the same room in 1864, below.

1857:

Fort McHenry, Maryland--[Both barracks] Have had new locks on doors.

--J. L. Donaldson to Lieut. Col. H. Brooks, July 3, 1857, QMConFile--McHenry, Fort, RG92.

Fort Leavenworth, Kansas--So far as books are concerned, the lack of which I feel, as you may well believe, you are mistaken. Here a soldier is not, as in Germany, limited to his knapsack. For instance, I have a large chest full of tools [most of which I made myself, because I am the company armorer], a trunk full of underwear and clothing, and a small

chest of miscellaneous matter, such as books, tobacco, and the like. Then, too, I have two knapsacks (quite different from the German knapsacks which, however, no soldier here carries at all) full of soldier clothes and bedding, consisting of two woolen blankets and a buffalo fur. Consequently you will see that, although not all of the soldiers, nor even most of them, have as many chests, boxes, and packages as I have, it requires many wagons to transport a regiment across the prairies . . . .

--Bandel, Frontier Life in the Army, 114.

#### Civil War:

Many of these huts were deemed incomplete until a sign appeared over the door. Here and there some one would make an attempt at having a door-plate of wood suitably inscribed; but the more common sight was a sign over the entrance bearing such inscriptions, rudely cut or marked with Charcoal, as: "Parker House," "Hole in the War," "Mose Pearson's," "Astor House," "Willard's Hotel," "Five Points," and other titles equally absurd, expressing in this ridiculous way the vagaries of the inmates.

--Billings, Hardtack and Coffee, 47.

[In a winter hut knapsacks or bundles or personal effects were placed at the head of the bunk. Haversacks, canteens, and equipment usually hung on pegs in the walls, but there was no regular place for muskets. Hardtack boxes, the lids on leather hinges, served as "dish closets," and others on legs made tables, around which were homemade three- or four-legged stools. There might be a shelf over the fireplace for "bric-a-brac."] But such a hut as this one I have been describing was

rather high-toned. There were many huts without any of these conveniences.

--Ibid., 70-71.

1864:

Musicians' training barracks, Governors Island, New York--A wide shelf for knapsacks, shoes, drums, and other properties ran around the room above the beds, and on hooks under the shelf were hung articles of clothing.

Ostrander, Army Boy, 15.

1866:

New Post on the Upper San Pedro, Arizona--[In the tent of 1st Sergeant David Grew, Company G, 1st Cavalry,] neither did I observe in the half-darkness of the tent, illumined by a solitary tallow candle, a tumbler, a sugar bowl, and some lemons standing on a cracker box near his bed. . . . I placed my bottle and cigars on Grew's homemade table; he carried a corkscrew of course.

--Spring, John Spring's Arizona, 62.

1870:

While it may be perfectly true that at almost every post the bath-tub should be considered as important an article of equipment as the

cooking-stove, it is still no good excuse for lack of bathing facilities that regular bath-tubs and circulating boilers have not been furnished.

--Billings, Report on Barracks and Hospitals, xvii.

Camp Bowie, Arizona--[The barracks have] no other furniture than the rough bunks.

--Ibid., 471.

Camp Crittenden, Arizona.--[Besides bunks, the] only fixtures are wooden arm-racks and benches.

--Ibid., 474.

Fort Foote, Maryland--Over each [bunk] is a shelf for the knapsack of the soldier.

--Ibid., 68.

Fort Independence, Massachusetts--The furniture of these squad rooms is little beside the stove, bunks, and bedding, the clothing, arms and accoutrements of the men.

--Ibid., 16.

Madison Barracks, New York--Each squad-room is thoroughly fitted up with gun racks, lockers for the clothing and effects of the men, tables, chairs, shelves, and clothes-hooks . . . [each] locker and shelf are painted with [the soldier's] name and company number.

--Ibid., 99.

Fort Monroe, Virginia--The men sleep in the main room of the company quarters . . . in which, too, are kept their boxes, extra clothing, apparatus for cleaning arms, accoutrements &c.

--Ibid., 75.

Camp Verde, Arizona--[The] only fixtures or furniture is a double line of bunks . . . .

--Ibid., 469.

Fort Washington, Maryland--[Besides bunks, the barracks are] also fitted with . . . lockers, and gun racks.

--Ibid., 70.

Fort Davis, Texas--There is in all the Quarters a want of system of arranging the boxes. Many of them being placed in the middle of the

floor and used to sit on. I would suggest that several benches be provided for each barrack.

--Medical History of Fort Davis, Jan. 7, 1870.

Babcock fire extinguishers--These machines are designed, not as a means of extinguishing large conflagrations, but of preventing them, and, being portable and self-acting, are always available for immediate action.

--ARQMG 1870, 189-90.

1874:

Johnson pump fire extinguisher--Careful experiments in this city having shown that a small hand force-pump, known as Johnson's Hand Force-Pump, is quite as efficient in extinguishing flames as the chemical fire-extinguisher, its use has been adopted, and two hundred and fourteen have been distributed to military posts. They have saved much property.

--ARQMG 1874, 123.

1875:

General Orders No. 56, War Department, Adjutant-General's Office, April 30, 1875, directs the Quartermaster's Department to provide in all permanent barracks a box or locker 24 inches in length, 12 inches in breadth, and 10 inches in height, for each soldier to store his dress uniform and extra clothing; the boxes to be permanent fixtures of the

barracks. They are being supplied upon the requisition of the proper officers.

--ARQMG 1875, 197.

I would strongly urge that cheap, strong bathing-tubs, or other means of cleansing the whole body, should be as regular a part of the supply of a post as bedsteads.

--Billings, in Report on Hygiene, x-xi.

1877:

[To improve the life of the soldiers, they should be regularly supplied with volumes of the classics and the best current literature, including newspapers and magazines,] and these publications should be regularly sent to each company in the Army, whether at regular and permanent posts or not.

--ARSecWar 1877, vii.

1878:

Under [the Secretary of War's] instructions to provide chairs for use in barracks by soldiers, who have heretofore been accustomed to sit on benches or boxes or their beds, arrangements have been made to manufacture a sufficient supply for the barracks and posts east of the Rocky Mountains, at the military prison, at a cost of \$1 for each chair. To supply the distant posts beyond the Rocky Mountains contracts have been made on the Pacific coast, at \$1.66-2/3 each chair.

The chair adopted as a model is a strong, substantial wooden chair, with wooden molded seat. It is easy, durable, and cheap, and will add much to the comfort of troops, and at a very moderate expenditure.

--ARQMG 1878, 262.

1881:

On the subject of bath-rooms there is absolute unanimity. The Regulations say the men must be made to bathe frequently; the doctors say it should be done; the men want to do it; their company officers wish them to do so; the Quartermaster's Department says it is most important, yet we have no bathrooms.

[Anderson, "Army Posts, Barracks, and Quarters," 433-34.]

The reading-rooms established at most of the posts are very popular with enlisted men as well as officers. The average daily attendance upon them is about 4,800.

--ARSecWar 1881, 23.

#### Guardhouses

1805:

Fort Detroit, Michigan--[A] guard house also will be requisite, of one story, and about 15 feet square. The walls of the guard house should be built of square timber of nine inches thickness.

--Secretary of War Dearborn to Commanding Officer at Detroit, Aug. 5, 1805, quoted in Prucha, Sword of the Republic, 174.

1857:

Fort Randall, Dakota--When my ten days of solitary confinement expired, I commenced the last term of ten days at hard labor the same as before. During those terms I had to sleep on the floor in the large prison room with the other prisoners. I would have preferred to sleep in the cell alone.

--Meyers, Ten Years in the Ranks, 132.

1869:

--Fort Davis, Texas--[The post surgeon has inspected the guardhouse often,] and under his directions disinfectants have been freely and constantly used.

--Medical History of Fort Davis, Nov. 1869.

1870:

Fort McHenry, Maryland--The guard-house is warmed by stoves, ventilation is rather imperfect, and the building is believed to be decidedly unhealthy.

--Billings, Report on Barracks and Hospitals, 65.

Fort Pulaski, Georgia--[The guard house consists of three casemates, warmed by] large stoves and open fireplaces.

--Ibid., 149.

Fort Laramie, Wyoming--[The upper floor houses one room for the men of the guard, another for the officer, plastered and ceiled, with six windows between them.] The larger room contains a rough board bed, where all the members of the guard who are off duty may lie down, a couple of chairs, and a desk. [The upper rooms are warmed by stoves.] The basement room is of rough stones, whitewashed, has one door and a window towards the river, and on the opposite side at the top two small windows for ventilation. A couple of cells are partitioned off in the south side for refractory prisoners.

The prisoners are all kept in the basement room which contains no furniture. There are ten prisoners at present. The basement room is neither warmed nor lighted.

--Ibid., 348.

1872:

Fort Davis, Texas--In accordance with the communication of the Post Surgeon . . . the Guard House was enlarged by adding on a new room 12 x 16. This building is never well policed, always in a very filthy and disgusting condition, although disinfectants are freely issued from the Hospital. They are either wasted or improperly used by reason of it not being the obligation of any one to superintend this matter.

--Medical History of Fort Davis, May 1872.

1873-75:

Probably Fort Randall, Dakota--The guard house clock . . . . the guard house broom . . . .

--Cox, Five Years in the United States Army, 70-73.